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Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103

Claims 1,3,8 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Mizrahi, U.S. Patent 6,069,719. Claims 1-3, 6-10, 13-18, 20-23 and 25-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiragaki et al (6,115,517).

The Examiner has indicated that claims 5, 12, 19 and 24 are objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 5, previously indicated as allowable. Applicants have also amended independent claims 8, 16, 17, 22 and 28 to include the limitations indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Thus, all pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and a notice to this effect is hereby requested.

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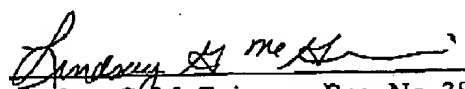
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Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Lindsay G. McGuinness, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-6664 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

4/15/2004
Date


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